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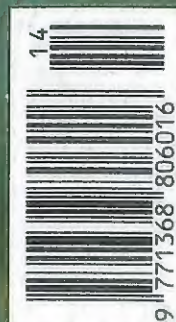
THE SPINECHILLER COLLECTION

14



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FREE IN
ISSUE 15
Spooky
Pop-up!



Next week in

THE SPINECHILLER
Collection

SUPER SCARY STORY
The Witch

OUR HAUNTED WORLD
Japan
The Candidate

STRANGE BUT TRUE
Ley Lines

CLASSIC SERIAL
The Real and the Counterfeit:
Chapter 1

PUZZLES
Moon Lab

THE UNEXPLAINED
More UFOs

14 CONTENTS

SUPER SCARY STORY
Beat Bart

OUR HAUNTED WORLD
Wales
Nothing to Declare!

STRANGE BUT TRUE
The Flying Dutchman

CLASSIC SERIAL
The Old Nurse's Story
Chapter 2

PUZZLES
Spooky Museum

THE UNEXPLAINED
Vampires

BEAT BART



Oliver dropped his satchel on the floor and plopped
down on to his desk chair. He switched on his com-
puter and was soon scrolling through the browser for
Game Time, a newly discovered bulletin board for
computer gamers.

He entered his ID number and password. Then the standard
greeting appeared and the server waited for his response.

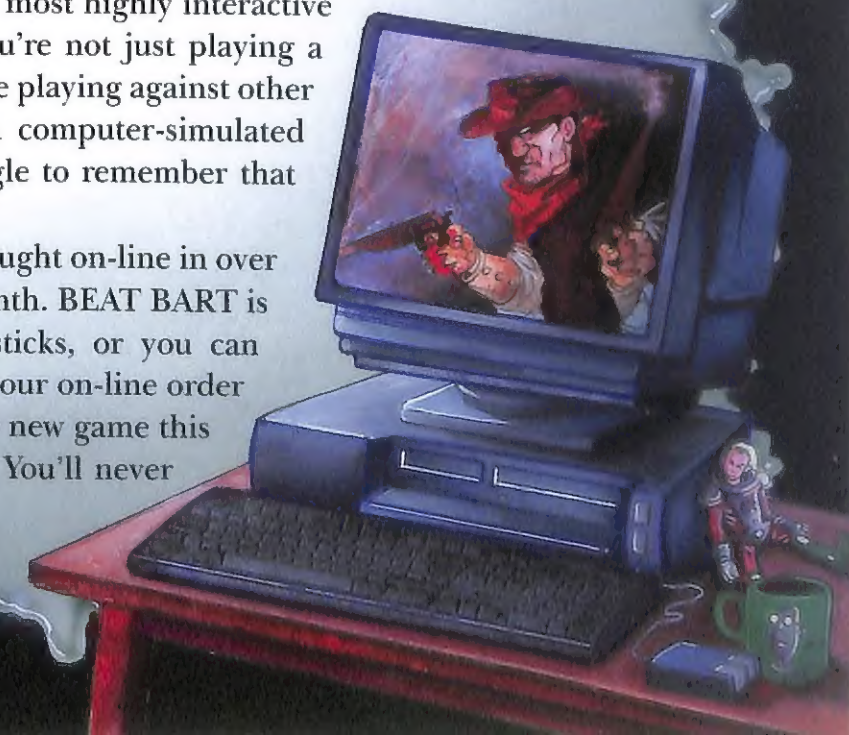
"OK," Oliver said out loud, "what's it going to be today?"

He decided to look in the section called New Stuff, where he
found an announcement for a brand-new interactive game which
claimed that it was "BETTER THAN VIRTUAL REALITY!"

"I doubt it," Oliver scoffed. But he read the announcement
anyway.

"BEAT BART," the announcement read. "Hailing a new gen-
eration of computer games. Forget the crummy graphics and
jerky movements of most other computer games. BEAT BART is
as different from these clunkers as your computer is from a cal-
culator. BEAT BART combines the latest in virtual reality pro-
gramming with the newest, most highly interactive
games. In BEAT BART you're not just playing a
computer simulation, you're playing against other
people! You are both in a computer-simulated
setting so real you'll struggle to remember that
it's 'only a game'!

"BEAT BART will be brought on-line in over
100 cities over the next month. BEAT BART is
compatible with most joysticks, or you can
order the BARTGUN from our on-line order
number. If you try only one new game this
year, make it BEAT BART. You'll never
want to play another."



Oliver read through the list of dates that followed. "Excellent!" he yelled. His was one of the cities that would be part of the BEAT BART start-up. Marking the date on his desk calendar, Oliver moved on to the order line to buy the BARTGUN.



That was tough, too – using it with my left hand."

"Then what happens?"

"You choose a setting – I think there's Old West, Big City, Futuristic, and a couple of others. I picked

Old West, where you start off on the outskirts of a town. You have to find and shoot the other guy before he shoots you. But the cool thing is that the other guy is another player."

"What?"

"Yeah! Someone else who's logged on and is looking for you. You can play a hundred times and have a hundred different enemies."

"Is it tough?" Oliver asked.

"Not really," Rob said. "The guy I was up against didn't have a clue. I nailed him in five minutes. Then I played two more who were better, but I still won. I'm working my way up to Bart."

"Who's that?"

"Bart is the computer, or probably the programmer. Anyway, after you kill a certain number, you go up against Bart."

After talking to Rob, Oliver could hardly wait for his own chance to BEAT BART. Finally, the day arrived, and Oliver raced home from school. He wanted to get logged on fast in case there were a limited number of open ports. He waited impatiently for his computer to boot, then dialled the BEAT BART phone number.

"Welcome to BEAT BART," the screen flashed in bright red colours. "If you have bought a BARTGUN, please enter the serial number now."

Oliver did so, and stared at the screen.

"Hello, Oliver. Are you ready?"

"YES," Oliver typed.

"Good. Please connect your BARTGUN if you have not already done so. Then download the file BART.EXE to your computer. It will require 275k of memory. Then point the gun at the centre of your screen and follow the on-screen instructions."

Oliver did as instructed, then he did a set of exercises designed both to initiate his computer and to give him some gun practice. Rob was right – it did take getting used to. After practising, he had to choose his setting. Smiling, he selected 'Old West'.

"Please enter the name you would like to be known as, or type [Enter] for your own name."

Oliver thought a moment, then typed "MAD DOG".

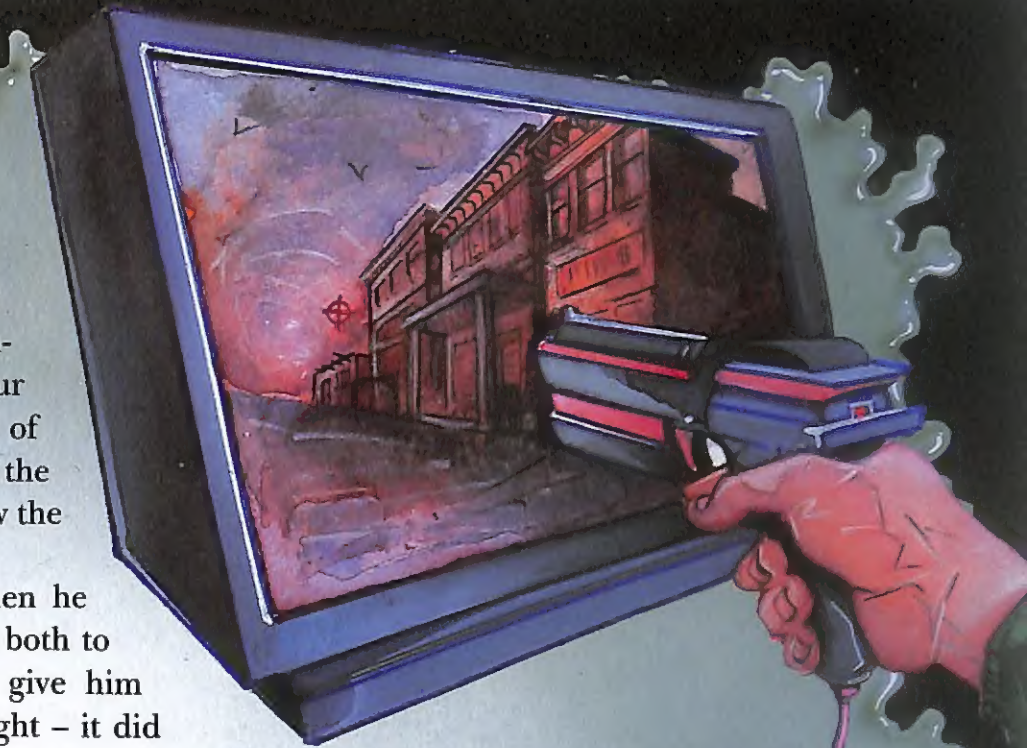
"OK, MAD DOG. Do you have a specific challenge in mind? Or are you open to all comers?"

Oliver didn't know Rob's game name, so he typed "OPEN."

His screen displayed a weathered signboard with the message, "For your information: LEE THE KID has been seen riding for town. Last time you saw him he warned you to be gone by the time he returned to town or he'd come gunning for you. The townsfolk wish you luck." The sign was replaced by an elevated view of an old western town.

Oliver gasped – the picture was as crisp as if he was staring out of a window, except for the gunsight's crosshairs, floating in mid-air. His hand, still holding the gun, dropped to the desk.

Suddenly, the view tilted crazily and settled on a view of two feet in cowboy boots



standing on dusty brown soil. As Oliver, disbelieving, raised his hand and pointed the gun ahead, the view righted itself.

"All right," Oliver drawled excitedly.

With one hand on the mouse and the other on the BARTGUN, Mad Dog walked into town to face Lee the Kid.



By supper time, Oliver was a seasoned veteran of three gunfights. Unlike Rob, he'd come up against a pretty good player on his first outing and he'd only won through sheer luck. He had been walking through town, amazed at the way the screen changed perspective with such fluid ease.

He could really believe he was walking down the dusty street of a western town. Wherever he pointed his gun, something appeared on the screen, even when he looked behind him.

The town was full of men, women, and children who watched solemnly as he walked down Main Street. Some of them called out a greeting which he heard through his computer speaker.



His sightseeing saved him in his first shoot-out. He'd just passed a general store when he thought, "Will I be allowed to enter it?" He slid the mouse to take a quick step backwards. At that moment he heard the crack of a bullet as it splintered the wooden post near his head. Oliver jumped, and the monitor showed the scene swirling madly as his hand waved the gun around. Meanwhile, his reaction had slid the mouse all the way to one side, sending him flying backwards through the doorway of the store.

Another shot shattered the glass door panel. Oliver managed to point his gun out of the window so he could look around.

Across the street was a man in dirty brown clothes. He was standing behind a post, sighting down his gun barrel at the door of the store. Without even checking the gunsight, Oliver fired. The man staggered from behind the post, blood soaking his shirt, and pointed his gun at Oliver.

This time Oliver centred the sight on the man's chest, then pulled the trigger. With a spray of blood, the man flew backwards to lie motionless in the street.

Suddenly, Oliver was back outside town, facing the signboard.

"Congratulations, MAD DOG. By riding us all of scum like LEE THE KID you have made Bartville a safer place to live. You have one notch in your gun grip. Care to try for another?"

The next battle lasted much longer, with both Oliver and opponent sneaking around town taking shots at each other. Finally, Oliver shot the other from a second-floor window.

In the third battle, Oliver raced to the other side of town to get his man – who never knew what hit him when he walked by Oliver's hiding place.

Over the new few weeks Oliver played BEAT BART as often as he could. He told all his friends at school about the game, but only one of them, Steve, had the required hardware. Oliver's parents thought he was a bit obsessed with the game, but as he was on his best behaviour otherwise, they let him continue.

Oliver called Rob sometimes to compare notes, but they made a promise never to tell each other their Western names. Rob told him, "I have a neat little trick that wins me about half the battles I'm in." He refused to say more than that. They began an informal contest to collect gun grip notches, racing neck and neck to the ultimate goal – the right to play against and, hopefully, to beat Bart himself.

One day Steve swaggered theatrically up to Oliver in the school playground. "You varmint," he said in his best gunslinger voice, "I'm calling you out!"

Oliver drawled, "Name the time, you fleabitten dog."

"Tonight at eight. If you ain't yellow."

"I'll be there," Oliver nodded. "What's your name, stranger? So I can get it right on your tombstone."

"Folks call me 'Killer'."

"Well, Killer, you'll be up against Mad Dog. And tonight you're gonna get bit!" Steve burst out laughing. "See you in Bartville," he called out as he walked off.



As Oliver logged on that night he realised how close he was to having enough notches to challenge Bart. Winning this battle against Steve would put him in the eligible column.

The signboard informed him that a challenge had been issued by KILLER, and asked if he wanted to accept it. Excited and nervous, Oliver entered "YES."

It seemed like ages before he logged off.

Oliver sat back and felt his sweat-drenched shirt against his skin. The long battle with Steve, alias Killer, had ended spectacularly. As Mad Dog, he'd aimed and fired in one motion, and had managed to hit Killer smack in the gun hand. When Steve tried to run, Oliver chased after him and plugged him in the back as he was sprinting down the street.

Of course, Oliver would never ever admit to Steve that his first shot had been pure luck – he had really been aiming for Killer's chest!



The next day at school he waited near the gate for the ex-Killer, but Steve didn't show up. And when he didn't turn up for lunch, Oliver began to suspect he was too embarrassed at losing to show his face a school.

"He's not going to get away with that," Oliver promised himself. After school he cycled to Steve's house and rang the doorbell. Steve's father opened the door. He looked awful, pale with dark circles under his eyes.

"Er, hi, Mr Reese," Oliver said. "Is Steve home?"

Mr Reese stared at Oliver for a long moment, then he said slowly, "Oliver. Steve was killed last night."

Oliver felt as he'd been run over. "What? How? I mean... I'm sorry but, well... Mr Reese, h-how did it happen?"

Steve's father answered in a voice as dead as his son. "We don't know. We found him this morning in his bedroom, shot."

A small, cold hand seemed to run its

fingers along Oliver's spine. "Shot?" he squeaked.

"That's right," Mr. Reese said in a dull voice. "Right here in his own room. We didn't hear a thing, but we found him there this morning."

Oliver gulped. Even as he asked the next question, he told himself that what he was thinking just wasn't possible.

"W-where was he shot?" he asked in a small voice.

Mr Reese's mouth stretched in a ghastly imitation of a smile. "That's the strange part, you know? He was shot twice. Once in the hand and once, according to the police doctor, in the back."

Oliver stumbled away from the door. He groped blindly for his bike and started for home, telling himself, "It's just a crazy coincidence!" But what kind of coincidence could explain a 13-year-old kid being shot for no reason, in the middle of his room, in exactly the same places, and on the same night that Oliver had shot him in a computer game?

He pulled up outside his house. If what he was thinking were true, then what about all those other people he had killed while playing BEAT BART? Even worse, what about all the other people who were still playing? Shivers racked his body as his mind began to add up the numbers. Steve's death had to be a coincidence. It had to be.

Oliver made his way to the phone and called his old friend Rob. There was no answer. He hung up and went to his room.

He found himself staring at the BEAT BART signboard. He had no memory of

sitting down and logging on, but the suddenly eerie signboard was there on his screen. "Congratulations MAD DOG," it read. You are now eligible to challenge BART for the title Master Gunslinger. Do you wish to to challenge Bart now?"



Oliver stared at the screen so long his screen saver winked on. If it were just a game, then he was acting like an idiot. But if, somehow, it were not, he might be risking his life. Thoughts swirling, he deliberately aimed and shot out the word "YES". He had to try to kill Bart – to save all the others who were playing this horrible game.

Like all the others, the game began with Oliver on the outskirts of the town. More cautious than ever, he carefully made his way into Bartville.

Oliver had already discovered that you didn't have to approach the town in a direct line from where you began. His usual practice was to circle around to the opposite side of town. Sometimes, when he was lucky, he could come up behind the other player and the battle would be over before it had even begun.

This time, however, something occurred that had never happened before. As he was making his way in a large circuit around Bartville, he saw another man doing the same! Moving quickly, Oliver

jumped down into a gully and raced away in the opposite direction.

Bart was good! he thought frantically. And if he was too good, what did that mean for Oliver?

Time passed without meaning as Oliver and Bart moved in an intricate dance through and around Bartville. Every now and then one would catch a glimpse of the other, and shots would crack over the speaker.

Then, on as simple a thing as turning a corner a second before the other gunman, the match was over. Oliver's bullet took Bart just to the right of the middle of his chest. The other gunman seemed to get drawn up on to his toes, where he balanced for an instant before slowly toppling over like a cut tree.

Wearily, Oliver let his gun slump down, and the screen obligingly showed him the dirt at his feet. After a moment, he realised how odd that was. At the end of every other battle he had been instantly presented with the signboard on the outskirts of town.

This time, he remained in the street.

Raising his gun, he looked around. A crowd was cautiously gathering round him and the fallen Bart. Suddenly curious to see what face the computer gave itself, Oliver walked over to the dead body.

His breath caught in his throat and he gasped. "No!" Lying in a patch of bloody mud was Rob. His eyes stared upwards and he blinked when Oliver came into his field of vision.

"Congratulations, Bart," he whispered. Then his eyes slowly rolled back in his head.

"That's right, son" said the old man who was standing next to Oliver. He clapped a friendly hand on Oliver's arm and Oliver felt it. "Now you're the Master Gunslinger. Glad to have you with us."

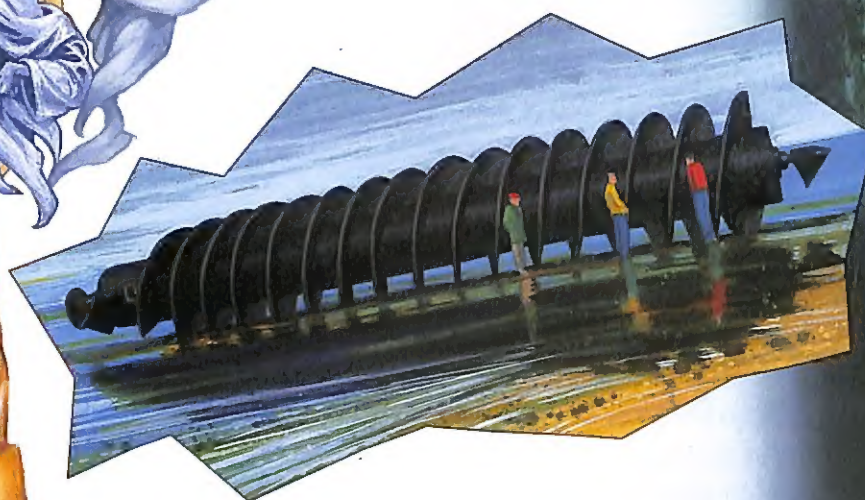
Oliver could smell the dusty air and feel the warm sun on his back. He could hear the townspeople murmuring. The old man looked down at Rob's lifeless body, then back up at Oliver. "Sure hope you last longer than that one did."

THE END



OUR HAUNTED WORLD

Wales has plenty of ghosts, magical wells and many stories that are just plain weird...



SOMEONE'S SCREW LOOSE

When this gigantic, 30-ton screw (above) was washed up on the beach at Port Talbot, West Glamorgan, the locals were totally mystified. No one knew what it was, or where it could have come from. Police said that no one had reported a screw loose!

WELLS OF POWER

More than 1000 Welsh wells have legends or special powers attached to them. To obtain the gift of healing, cursing, haunting or fulfilling a wish, people used to throw pins into the water. In Pembrokeshire, St Govan's Well, next to the saint's 13th-century tomb, was famous for curing bad eyesight, rheumatism and lameness. Sufferers lay down, were covered in red clay, then water from the well was poured over them. The well can still be reached by about 50 steps – but it is said that however many steps you count on the way down, you will always count a different number on the way up!

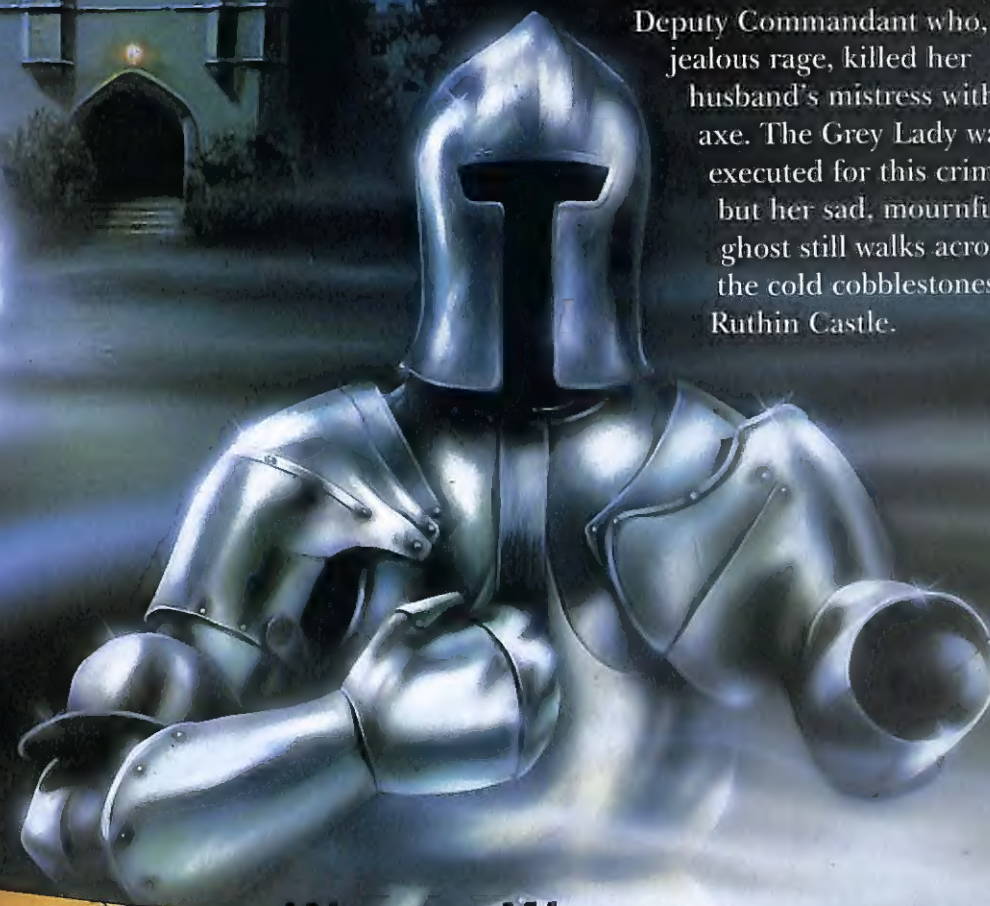


NO GETTING OVER IT!

Less than a month after it was built, a new wooden footbridge over the River Penrhos vanished into thin air! The local council built another one, this time out of heavy steel. Amazingly, the replacement bridge disappeared as well. How – or why – anyone would pinch two bridges is something that's been puzzling local residents since 1987!

INN FOR A FRIGHT!

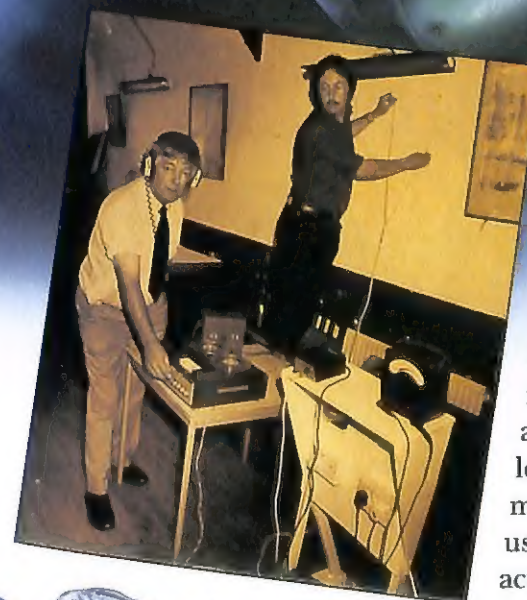
Spooky Ruthin Castle in Clwyd was built in the 13th century. It is now a hotel – and it has several ghosts! These include a man in a suit of armour who appears to have lost one gauntlet, a weird ball of light which bounces round the castle grounds, and the most often seen 'Grey Lady'. The story goes that she was the wife of the castle's Deputy Commandant who, in a jealous rage, killed her husband's mistress with an axe. The Grey Lady was executed for this crime, but her sad, mournful ghost still walks across the cold cobblestones of Ruthin Castle.



WALL OF WORDS

When the landlord of the Prince of Wales pub in Kenfig, Mid Glamorgan, complained of ghostly voices and organ music, help was at hand. An engineer and an industrial chemist (left) fed 20,000 volts of electricity through electrodes.

These were connected to the pub's stone walls, and also to a tape recorder. After four hours, the tape had recorded voices in what may have been an old Welsh language. Organ music and a clock ticking were also recorded in the room, which was locked and empty. Some scientists believe that the stone walls may have contained silica and ferric salts, the same substances used in audio tapes. If so, the walls themselves may have actually recorded some real sounds from the pub's past!



NOTHING TO DECLARE!

A friend of a friend's Welsh granny had an 80th Birthday party.



1 Her birthday gift from the family was a weekend in France!



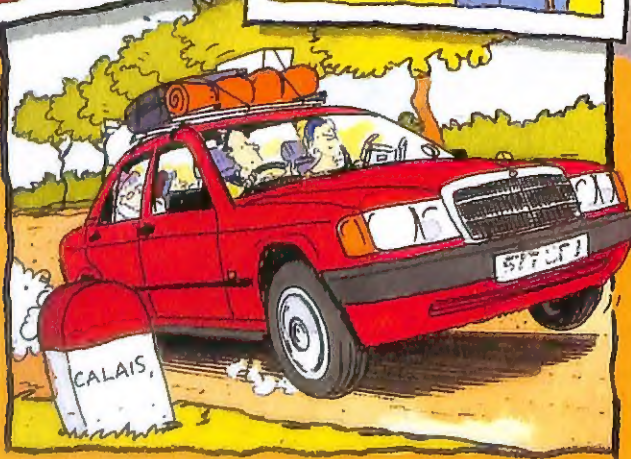
Granny saw the sights of Paris...



...bought some postcards...



...and ate lots of fine food.



2 They had a great time, but they all felt exhausted. Driving back to the channel ferry, it was hot and cramped in the car.

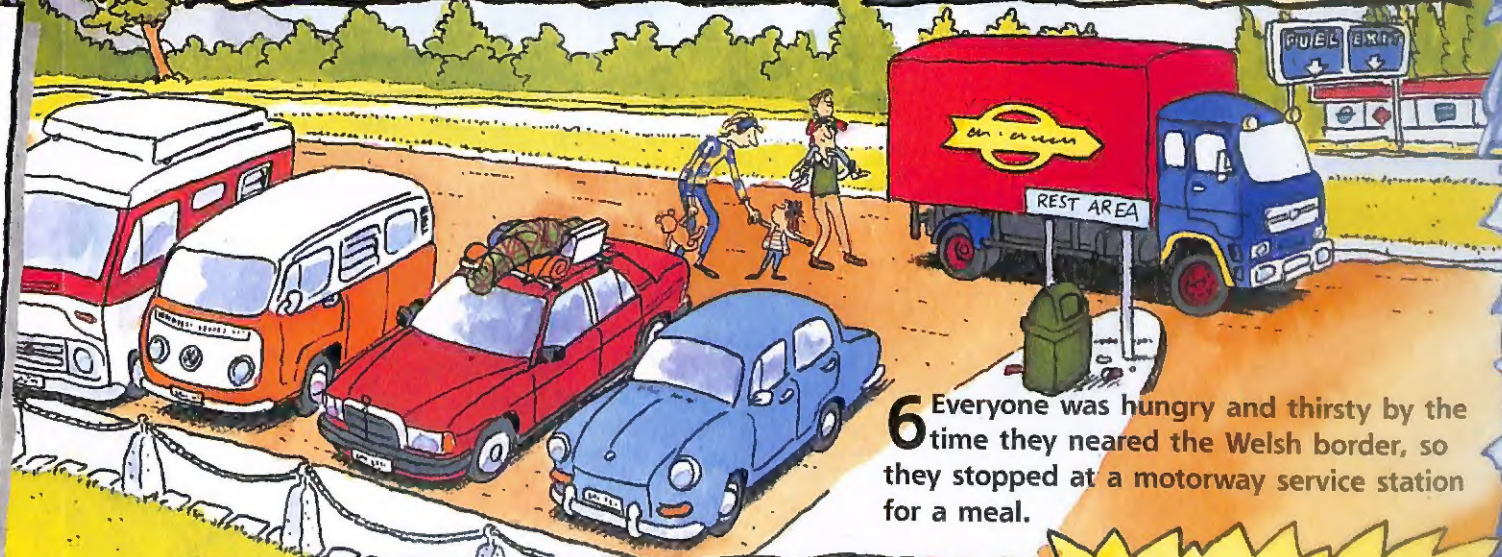
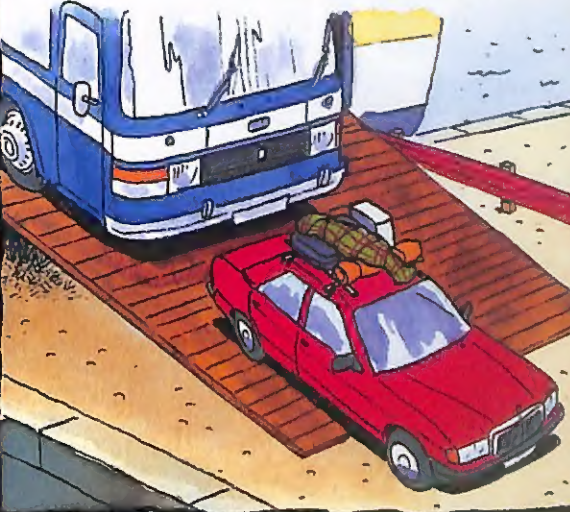


3 Only after Dad commented, "Granny's very quiet!" did they realise that she had died.

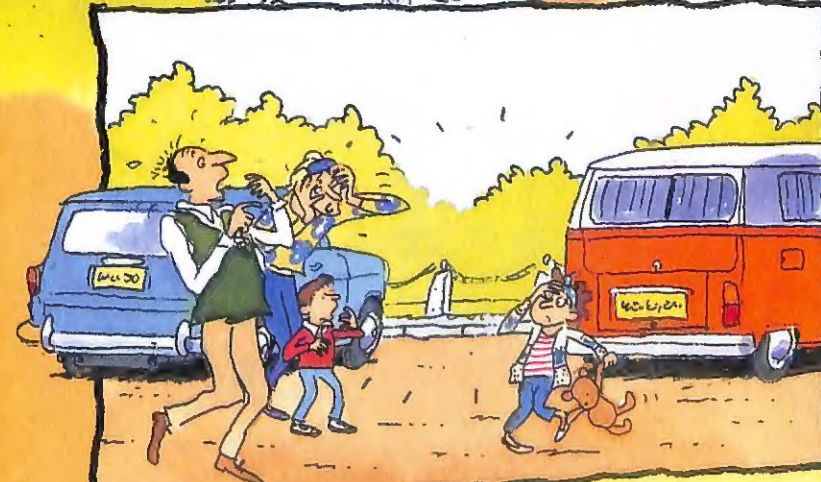
4 Granny had always said, "I'd rather die than be buried outside Wales!" So, to avoid red tape with the French authorities, the family hid the body in car rugs and tied it to the roof rack.



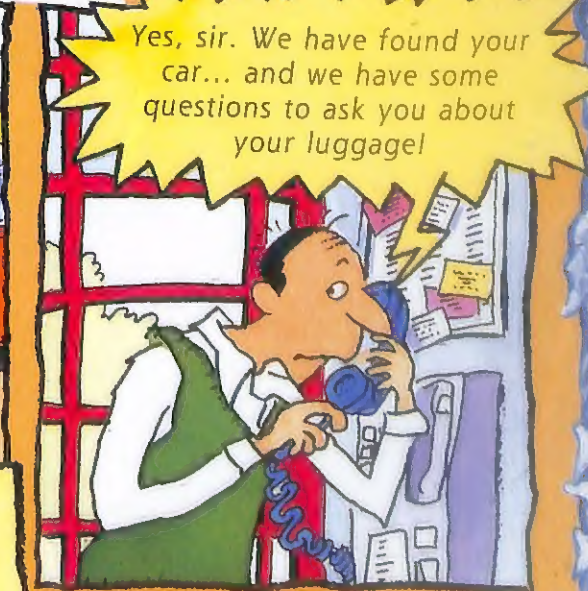
5 The car crossed the English Channel, then passed through UK customs without anyone checking the baggage.



6 Everyone was hungry and thirsty by the time they neared the Welsh border, so they stopped at a motorway service station for a meal.



7 An hour later, the family were horrified to discover that their car - and granny's body - had been stolen! Dad raced off to report it to the police.



Yes, sir. We have found your car... and we have some questions to ask you about your luggage!



THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

Special Investigation File: 14

Subject: mysterious appearances of a phantom ship on the high seas

SpineChiller creates a file

Evidence no: 14/1
The route taken by Dutch ships from Amsterdam to Java



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The original Flying Dutchman was Hendrik Van der Decken. He was the captain of an East Indiaman, a type of 17th-century sailing ship that was used to bring exotic goods back to Europe from the East Indies (now Indonesia). Van der Decken was an expert sailor, but a bad-tempered, arrogant man. When his ship ran into a storm near South Africa's Cape of Good Hope, he refused to turn back. Instead he raged against God and carried on towards the island of Java. It is said that, as a punishment, God condemned him to sail the seas for ever. Since that time, many people have spotted Van der Decken's ghostly ship. And now the ship itself, not its doomed captain, is known as the 'Flying Dutchman'.

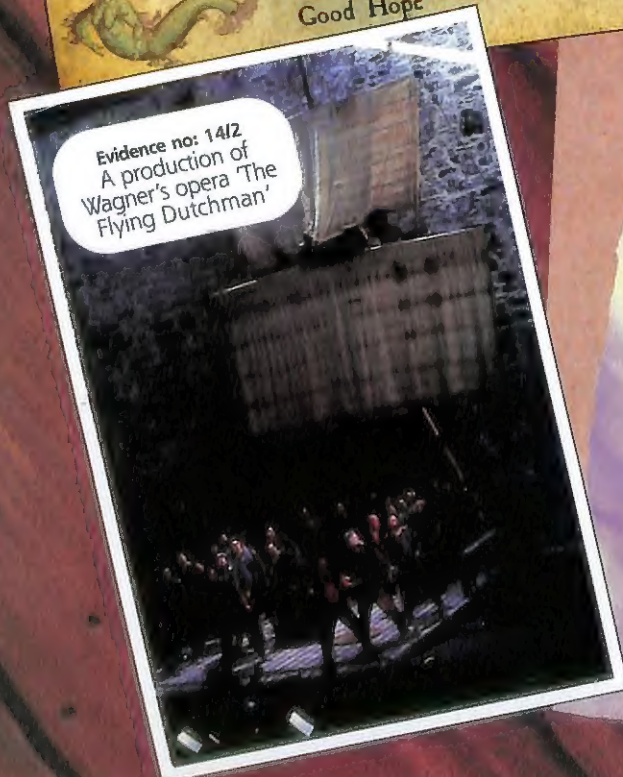
Dresden, 1843

Dearest Ursula

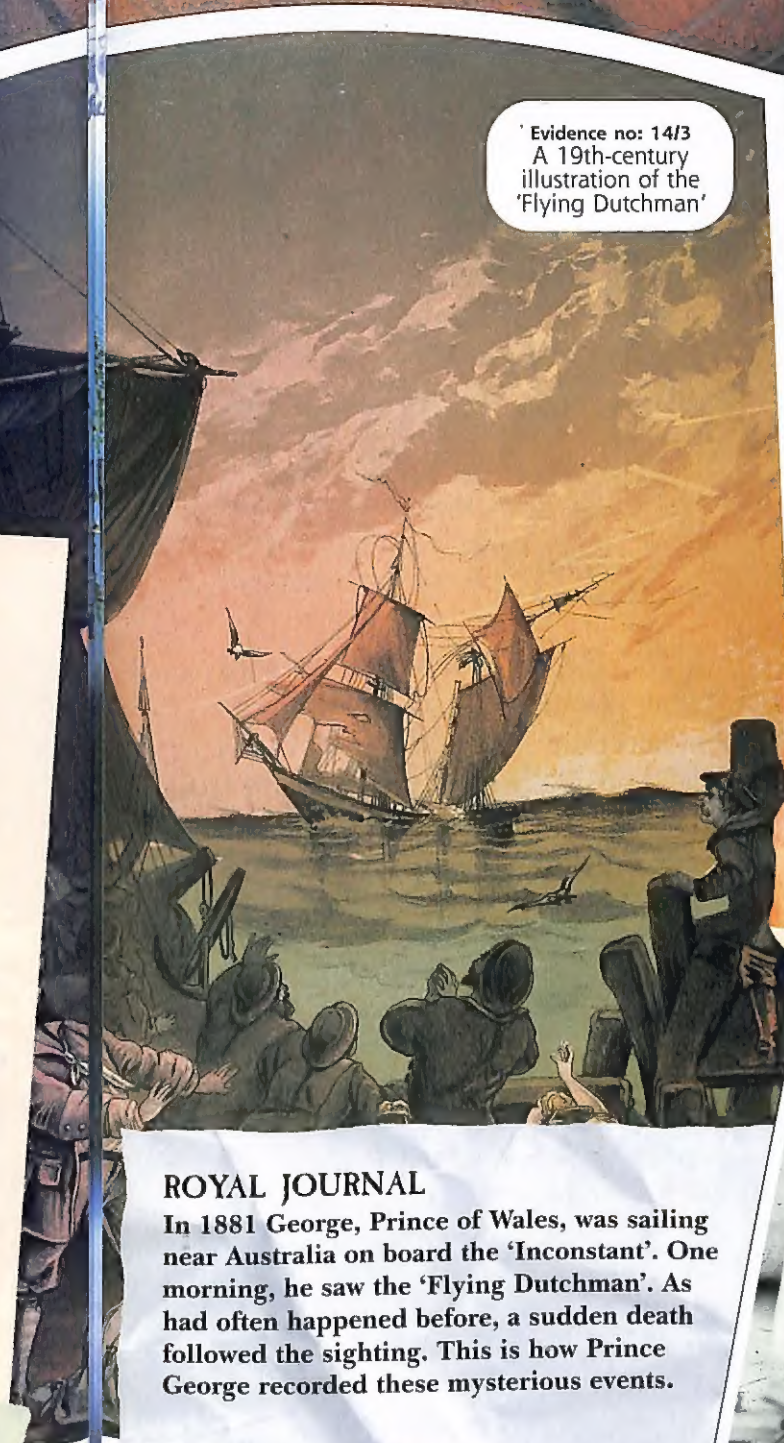
I went to a wonderful new opera by Richard Wagner last night. It was called *Der Fliegende Holländer* (The Flying Dutchman) and told the story of that phantom ship. Wagner changed the ending of the original story, though. The wicked sea captain escaped his fate by marrying, but then both he and his wife died. Do go and see it if you get the chance.

Your loving sister
Ingrid

Evidence no: 14/2
A production of Wagner's opera 'The Flying Dutchman'



Evidence no: 14/3
A 19th-century illustration of the 'Flying Dutchman'



ROYAL JOURNAL

In 1881 George, Prince of Wales, was sailing near Australia on board the 'Inconstant'. One morning, he saw the 'Flying Dutchman'. As had often happened before, a sudden death followed the sighting. This is how Prince George recorded these mysterious events.

June 11th., 1881

At 4 a.m. the 'Flying Dutchman' crossed our bows. A strange red light as of a phantom ship all aglow in the midst of which light the masts, spars and sails of a brig* 200 yards distant stood out...Thirteen persons altogether saw her, but whether it was...the 'Flying Dutchman' or what else must remain unknown.

At 10.45 a.m. the ordinary seaman who had this morning reported the 'Flying Dutchman' fell from the...foretopmast...and was smashed to atoms...At the next port we came to the Admiral was also smitten down.

* a 'brig' is a type of sailing ship.

Evidence no: 14/4
An extract from Prince George's journal

Johannesburg, March 1939 SPOOK SHIP SPOTTED!

Sunbathers gasped in amazement yesterday as a majestic 17th-century ship appeared near the Cape of Good Hope.

The legend of the 'Flying Dutchman' is well known to most South Africans. But sunseekers in Glencairn yesterday began to think that the story could be true. Sixty of them report seeing an East Indiaman gliding past, its sails billowing. As it neared land, it simply disappeared.

One witness, Helene Tydell, said: "Let the sceptics say what they will, that ship was none other than the 'Flying Dutchman'."



Evidence no: 14/5
Prince George and his younger brother, Prince Albert

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?
The original 'Flying Dutchman' story was based on many different events, both real and legendary. It contains elements of the true story of Bartolomeu Dias, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1488. It was also influenced by tales of 17th-century Dutch sailors told about abandoned ships in the Indian Ocean. Scientific experts suggest that the modern sightings are the result of mirages, which project the images of distant ships on to the sky. But this does not explain why witnesses see not a modern vessel, but a 200-year-old East Indiaman!

Unexplained

CLASSIC



SERIAL

Chapter 2

The Old Nurse's Story

Retold from the story by Mrs Gaskell

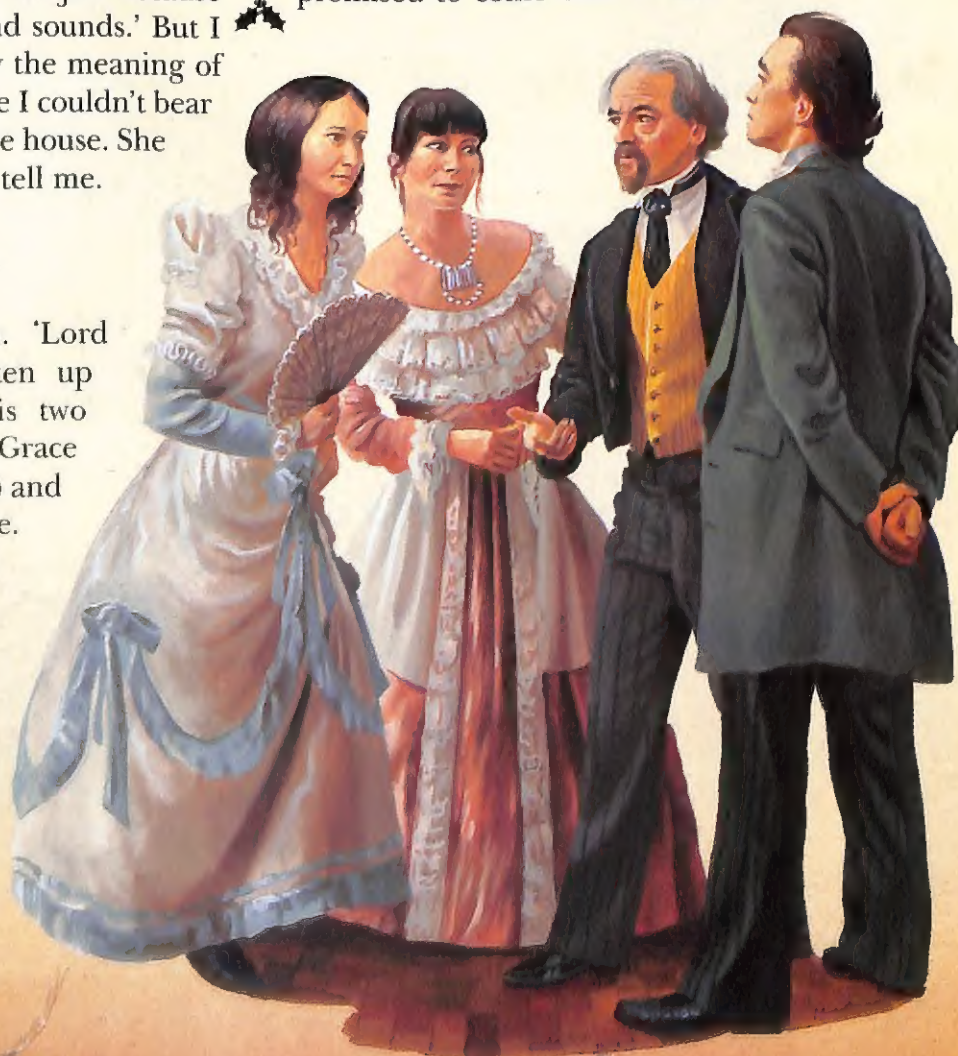
"Dorothy looked petrified as Miss Rosamond cried hysterically that she wanted to let the little girl in. So I made up my mind to take my charge away from that unhappy house the very next day. Once I had put her to bed, I told Dorothy of my decision.

"You cannot take her from here, for she is a ward of court," she explained. 'And I hope you would not desert her just because of some harmless sights and sounds.' But I insisted that I had to know the meaning of these apparitions, otherwise I couldn't bear to sleep another night in the house. She sighed and then agreed to tell me.

"Slowly she began. 'Lord Furnivall was eaten up with pride in his two young daughters – Miss Grace (the present Miss Furnivall) and her older sister Miss Maude. When they were growing up, he declared that no man was good enough to marry them. His fierce temper only quietened when he played music. One summer he invited a foreign musician to teach him the organ. The musician arrived

from London and soon won over the lord with his fine playing. While his pupil practised, the musician often took a stroll in the woods with one or other of the young ladies. He paid them great attention, and both fell in love with him. But one day, towards the end of the summer, he and Miss Maude slipped away and were secretly married.

"The musician returned to London, but promised to come back to the



manor the following summer. He kept his promise, and this time he courted Miss Grace. He told Miss Maude that this was to prevent Grace from suspecting his true relationship to her. But Miss Maude had good reason to feel very possessive about the musician, for he was not only her husband, but also the father of her baby girl.

"The child had been born at a farmhouse on the moors some months before. When Miss Maude returned from her secret visits to the baby she adored, she grew fiery with rage to find her husband alone with her younger sister. The musician soon tired of her angry outbursts and so left Furnivall Manor a month earlier than planned.

"As winter approached, the old lord grew weak and had to walk with a stick. He also became even more crotchety than usual. The sisters were like a pair of wild cats together and only spoke civilly to each other in their father's company.

"The following summer, the musician returned, but the sisters fought over him so bitterly that one day he packed his bags and left. Afterwards, not a word was heard of him. Blaming one another for his departure, the sisters moved their rooms to opposite ends of the house – Miss Maude to the east wing, Miss Grace and her maid, Mrs Stark, to the west.

"Miss Grace, though still beautiful, soon began to look drawn and pale. But Miss Maude had colour in her cheeks and appeared happier. This was because she had smuggled her baby daughter in to her private rooms.

"I don't know how it happened, but it appears that one day the sisters met in the

hall and soon began arguing loudly. Miss Maude taunted Miss Grace by telling her that the musician was her husband and that he had only pretended to love Grace. Miss Grace stormed back to her rooms and swore to Mrs Stark that she would take her revenge on her older sister.

"One snowy night, just after New Year, the servants heard the old lord's voice raised in anger. Then they heard a woman's reproaches and the cries of a young child. Finally, the crying stopped and there was a deathly silence in the house. Later that night, the servants thought that they could hear a woman wailing out on the hillside. Early next morning, old Lord Furnivall summoned them all. With Miss Grace standing by his side, he told them that his other daughter, Maude, had brought great disgrace on the Furnivall name and for that reason he had banished both her and her illegitimate child. He made everyone swear never to help either mother or daughter.

"Later that day, a shepherd found poor Miss Maude sitting under some holly trees



Underlined words are explained in WORD POWER.

on the fells with a crazy smile on her face. She was clutching her dead daughter. The child had a terrible wound on her shoulder, but people say that it was the bitter cold, not the wound, that killed her.'

"Dorothy stopped and I sat in silence as the full horror of the tale hit me. It was no wonder that Miss Furnivall looked so sad and lifeless – I almost pitied her. But more urgently, I felt fear for the safety of Miss Rosamond. What if the ghost child should lure her out again?"

"From that night on, I never let Miss Rosamond out of my sight. Every evening, Dorothy and I firmly bolted the doors and closed the window shutters an hour before dark. Even so, my charge still heard the crying from outside and always begged me to allow the ghost child in.

"One night, Miss Furnivall rang for me. Although Miss Rosamond was fast asleep, I dared not leave her alone, so I wrapped her in her warm dressing gown and carried her

downstairs. Miss Furnivall wanted me to unpick some stitching, so I laid Miss Rosamond on the sofa. As I worked, I could hear the wind rattling the windows. Miss Furnivall seemed unaware of the noise until she suddenly pushed herself up from her chair, held out a trembling arm and cried, 'I can hear voices... terrible screams... my father's voice!'



"Just then, Miss Rosamond sat bolt upright and shouted, 'My little girl is crying and crying!' She tried to climb down from the sofa, but luckily her feet got tangled in the dressing gown and I caught hold of her. I held her tight, even though she struggled to get out of the room. Then I, too, heard voices – screams that seemed to be coming from the direction of the hall. Miss Furnivall was already walking out of the drawing room towards the hall, with Mrs Stark behind her. So I followed, carrying Miss Rosamond in my arms.

"When we reached the hall, I noticed that the chandelier was alight and the fire was blazing, though it gave off no heat. The screams had grown louder and were coming from behind the closed door to the east wing. Suddenly the door swung back and out stumbled a beautiful woman, with a small girl clinging to the skirt of her dress. Behind them, a tall old man with grey hair and a face red with anger was shaking his walking stick in a frenzy.

"Miss Rosamond cried, 'Hester! It's the lady and my little girl. They want me to go with them. I must go!' And she tried to squirm out of my arms. But nothing could persuade me to let go of her and I held her so tight that I thought I might crush her.

"The old man seemed to be herding the lady and child towards the front door when suddenly the lady turned round to face him defiantly. The next minute she seemed to change her mind and spun round with her arms stretched out to gather the child close.

"Suddenly I heard Miss Furnivall cry out, 'No father! I beg you, don't! The child is innocent!' And then I saw that the old man had raised his stick high above his head. Standing beside him with a look of hatred on her face was a beautiful young

WORD POWER

petrified – extremely scared

ward of court – a person placed in the care of a guardian by a court

crotchety – bad-tempered; cross

taunted – jeered at; mocked

reproaches – words or cries of blame

banished – sent away

illegitimate – whose parents are not married

defiantly – in an openly challenging and aggressive manner

lady in a blue satin gown and white fur hat. I suddenly remembered the portrait of Miss Grace – Miss Furnivall as a young woman – and knew that this was her.

"Miss Furnivall's words had no effect, and I watched in horror as the old man struck the child with the stick. At that very moment, the chandelier dimmed, the fire went out and Miss Furnivall collapsed on the ground. But my first concern was for Miss Rosamond, who had fainted in my arms. I carried her upstairs and revived her by the fire. By the next morning, she had recovered her colour, and she never talked about the lady or the little girl again.

"Miss Furnivall never recovered. That night she lay in bed, moaning, 'You can never undo what you did in your youth. Never!' A week later she was dead.

"So, my dears, that is the story of your mother's first winter in Furnivall Manor. I suppose it must have been Miss Grace who told old Lord Furnivall about the child. And I suppose she must have regretted telling him every day, for the rest of her life."

THE END

NEXT ISSUE:

The Real and the Counterfeit by Mrs A Baldwin

MUSEUM PUZZLES

I am not, Isis is

Isis is lying

Anubis is

EGYPTIAN GODS

Osiris (left), Anubis (right) and Isis (centre) were asked: Who is the greatest god? Look at their replies. Only one of the gods is telling the truth, while the other two are lying. Can you work out who the greatest god is?

OLD TO NEW

Can you change Old into New in eight moves? Look at the clues, then put the words in the grid, changing only one letter at a time.

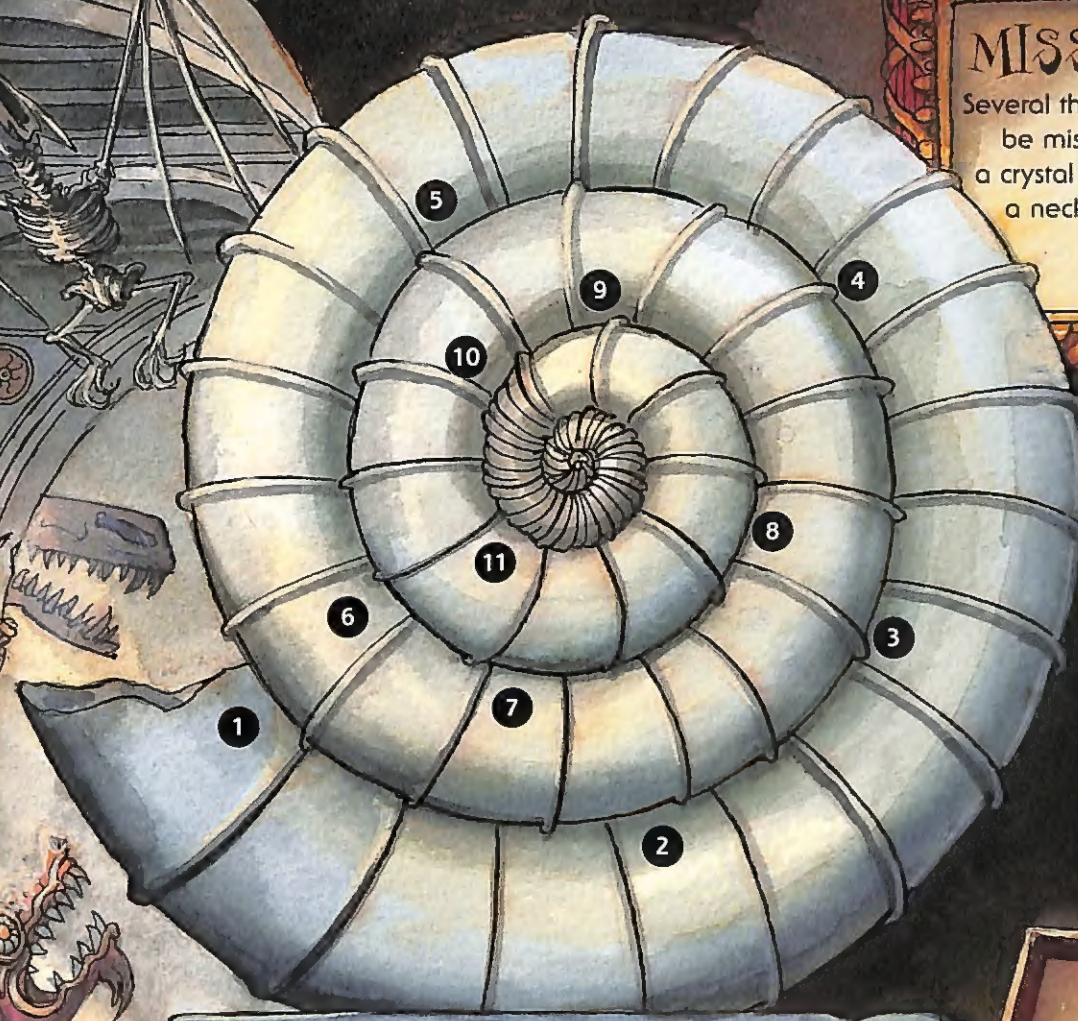
- Clues
- 1 Opposite of even
 - 2 A poem that's meant to be sung
 - 3 Need to repay
 - 4 Night bird
 - 5 Sticky liquid
 - 6 Nought
 - 7 A louse
 - 8 For catching fish

FANTASTIC FACTS

In the quarries of Ancona in Italy, a stone was found that contained a live and edible shellfish!

MISSING OBJECTS

Several things in the museum seem to be missing. Can you find a ring, a crystal skull, an Egyptian statuette, a necklace and a Greek vase in the room?



AMMONITE

Put the answers to the clues in the ammonite shell. Each answer shares one or more letters with the previous answer.

- Clues
- 1 Opposite of rough
 - 2 Songbird
 - 3 Person who shows people to cinema seats
 - 4 Another word for ask
 - 5 Where you catch a train
 - 6 First number
 - 7 An _____ current
 - 8 What a magician performs
 - 9 A paper-covered, flying structure
 - 10 To impart knowledge
 - 11 Another word for pharmacist

FAB FACTS

In 1882, fossilised footprints were found in Nevada, USA, in sandstone that was 225-280 million years old. This was about 200 million years before man was thought to exist!

SEAL OF APPROVAL

Look at the seal. Which of the stamps on the paper was made by the seal?



NUMBER GRID

Fit the numbers below in the grid. Three numbers have been put in already to help you.

1912
3454
6763
2863
8967
5068

12
28
48
39
27
91
23
75

10487 86543
36746 08523

WHAT AM I?

My first is in SOCK and also in SHOE
My second's in PLENTY but not in FEW.
My third is in HORN but not in BONE,
My fourth is in STICK but not in STONE.
My fifth is in NOSE but not in CHEST,
My sixth is in EXAM but not in TEST.
I'm an ancient puzzle people can't sort out.
Nobody knows what I'm about.

FREAKY FACTS

In Rugby, England, a man saw something move in a piece of coal in his fire. He broke it open to reveal a toad! It had no mouth and was almost transparent, but lived for 5 weeks afterwards.

GREEK VASES

Which three vases are identical?

ANSWERS

WHAT AM I? Sphinx
NUMBER GRID
GREEK VASES: The three identical vases are as the seal
SEAL OF APPROVAL: Stamp A is the same
EGYPTIAN GODS: Osiris is the greatest god
Anubis is the only one telling the truth
5 off 6 nil 7 nil 8 nil
OLD TO NEW: 1 odd 2 odd 3 odd 4 owl
brick 9 kite 10 teach 11 chemist
4 request 5 station 6 one 7 electric 8
AMMONITE: 1 smooth 2 through 3 usher

THE UNEXPLAINED

VAMPIRES

Vampires are supposed to be the living dead. They rise from their graves in the dark of night and drink the blood of innocent victims. Today they only appear in films and stories, but 200 years ago, people really believed in them.

DRACULA

The most famous vampire is the bloodthirsty Count Dracula created by the writer Bram Stoker in his novel 'Dracula', published in 1897. Bram Stoker was inspired by the grisly true story of Vlad the Impaler, the son of Dracul, a nobleman from Transylvania in Eastern Europe.

▲ MAYAN VAMPIRES

Early Mexicans performed human sacrifices and drank their blood for strength.

◀ BLOODTHIRSTY PASTIME

During his bloody reign, Vlad is said to have impaled 40,000 people.

VAMP ALERT

Vampire stories come from all over the world. Mexican vampires have a fleshless skull, while Chinese vampires draw strength from the light of the moon. But it is the deathly pale vampires of Eastern Europe, with their full red lips, fangs, hypnotic eyes and talon-like fingernails, that are the most famous. Indeed, between 1500 and 1700 there were so many reported attacks by vampires in parts of Europe that it was described as an epidemic. Most terrifying was the belief that once attacked by a vampire, the victim would also turn into one.

◀ SPOOKY STORY

The story of Count Dracula is a blood-curdling horror story that has been read by millions the world over.



▲ FANGS A LOT

The 1958 version of 'Dracula' was so popular that 'The Brides of Dracula' followed swiftly in 1960.

GRAVE DIGGERS

In 1732, in a remote village in Eastern Europe, people claimed that a vampire was attacking his own family. A man who had been dead for three years was said to have walked from his grave and murdered three of his nieces and one nephew by drinking their blood. The grave of the suspected vampire was opened and it was recorded that the man looked as though he was sleeping rather than dead. His nails and hair were long and his heart was still beating. The vampire was killed in the traditional way – pierced through the heart with an iron (or wooden) stake, then his head was cut off and buried separately.

PROTECTION FROM VAMPIRES

- 1 Daylight is fatal to vampires – they can only walk from the grave at night.
- 2 Garlic and salt are said to keep a vampire at bay.
- 3 Holy water or a crucifix is a strong deterrent.
- 4 A stake through the heart is the only sure way to despatch a vampire for good.

◀ A SILENT SCREAM

German cinema created the first film vampire in 'Nosferatu' (1922).

BURIED ALIVE!

Why should people have believed so strongly in corpses coming to life and drinking blood? Today, even with all our high-tech medical equipment, it has been known for people to be mistakenly pronounced dead. In previous centuries it was much harder to be sure that a person was really dead. Among the bodies removed from old graves a startling number have been found to have broken fingers and dried blood from wounds made after the coffin was closed. Sometimes the victims had managed to claw through their coffins in a desperate attempt to escape.

MYTH OR MURDER?

It's possible, then, that a vampire was actually someone who had been buried alive! When a coffin was broken open and fresh blood was seen, or a heartbeat detected, the investigators thought that the person had become a supernatural being. Rather than save the unfortunate victims, they made sure they were dead. The characteristic skeletal appearance of vampires was probably due to a partly decomposing body. Nowadays, vampires are still very much alive – but only in films!



▲ WE ALL LOVE VAMPIRES

'Bram Stoker's Dracula' the 1996 film version added special effects and fabulous costumes to the old story.